

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday 6th September 2020

Silent Key – William (Billy) Dalton GI0VLE/GI7FRQ

It is with great sadness that we announce the news of the passing of one of radio's great characters, William (Billy) Dalton GI0VLE/GI7FRQ of Milltown, County Antrim who became a Silent Key on 27th August 2020, aged 83 years. Billy passed away peacefully at Lakeview Nursing Home, Crumlin, after a period of ill health in his later years. He now rests in Gartree Parish Churchyard, near Langford Lodge in Crumlin. Billy was an IRTS member for many years and was well known to EI's as a regular caller to the Sunday IRTS news broadcasts. A full obituary will appear in the Autumn edition of Echo Ireland. Our sympathy to Beryl and the family. May he rest in peace.

RSGB Islands On The Air Contest Results 2020

The annual Islands on the Air Contest held on the last weekend in July has always been popular with EI operators and this year, of the 1975 entrants, eleven were EI stations. Five of these stations managed top ten places in their sections. Ger EI5KF was the leading EI station and finished in third place in the 12 hour, high power, CW assisted section. Peter EI7CC was fifth in the 12 hour, low power unassisted section, Brian EI8IU was fifth in 12 hour, high power unassisted section, Axel EI8JX finished in sixth place in the low power, CW assisted section and EI0W, operated by Oleg EI7KD, was in eighth place in the 12 hour high power unassisted section. We also have to mention Peter MI5JYK who earned first place in the SSB Non-Assisted 24-hours QRP section. Peter is a well-known QRP enthusiast who operates with home brew wire antennas: his contest entry of 245 QSOs and 53 multipliers using just 5W clearly demonstrates just how effective QRP can be. Congratulations to all the participants. The full results are available on rsgbcc.org.

Trans-Atlantic opening on 144 MHz between the Canary Islands and the Caribbean

There was a remarkable trans-Atlantic tropo opening on 144 MHz on the 27th and 28th of August 2020 between the Canary Islands and the Caribbean. Several stations on the island of Tenerife managed to make successful contacts on FT8 and SSB with

stations on Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe and Martinique. EA8CXN managed to make at least two trans-Atlantic contacts on SSB with FM5CS on Martinique and FG8OJ on Guadeloupe, a distance of approximately 4,800 kilometres. The contacts with Puerto Rico were in the region of 5,200 kilometres which is a new distance record across the Atlantic. Amazingly, EB1DJ in the north-west of Spain reports that he got one single decode of the FT8 signal from KP4EIT in Puerto Rico, a distance of just over 6,000 kilometres. More information on these exciting events on ei7gl.blogspot.com. IRTS have the Brendan Awards available to encourage experimentation with two-way trans-Atlantic communications by radio amateurs using the Two Metre Band. Details on www.irts.ie/brendan

European SOTA Activity Day on September 19th

Saturday, 19th of September is European SOTA activity day. On this day we want to activate as many SOTA summits in EI as possible. The plan is to make as many QSO's as possible with activators in EI and with SOTA activators on summits across Europe. Stations will be on the air on summits across Europe on most bands and modes. You can post an alert in advance for your planned activation and spot yourself when qrv, using the resources on the SOTAWATCH website. This will likely result in a mini pile-up of your own. Make a minimum of 4 QSO's to claim SOTA points for your activation. There are 389 designated SOTA summits in EI ranging from 200m hills to Carrauntoohil. You can find your nearest designated summit on the mapping pages of the SOTA website. There are some simple rules but nothing complicated. Why not brush the dust off your portable gear and give it a go. All you need is a handheld to make EI/GI contacts and QRP power on HF.

IRTS Contest News

The 70cms and 2 metres IRTS Counties Contests take place next Sunday. The 70cms event runs from 2.00pm to 2.30pm local time, followed immediately by the 2 metres contest, from 2.30pm to 4.00pm. Both contests have mixed mode SSB/FM and FM-only sections and, as they generally attract portable operation from hilltops, expect to hear some relatively rare counties on the bands. Full details are at www.irts.ie/contests note in particular the permitted SSB frequencies and FM channels, also the QSY Rule that applies to FM channels only.

Limerick Clare Amateur Radio Club

Work continues on the base for a tilt over mast and the setting up of a club station at

the Shannon Aviation Museum. Meanwhile we are awaiting the delivery of the Hex Beam. Wires-X, on the LCARC 70cms repeater, continues to be very busy - usage has increased by more than 500%. Club members have had QSOs with our sister club - the South Jersey Radio Association on K2AA. As their club activity takes place from 2000, local time for them: 0100 for LCARC, arrangements are being made to agree a suitable day and time for regular QSOs. First organized on June 12th, 1916 and affiliated with the American Radio Relay League since 1920, SJRA lays claim to be the oldest "continuously" operating amateur radio club in the United States. Club members are also using Peanut software by PA7LIM on their Android smart phones. This app is for radio amateurs only! With this client you can connect to the Peanut Server. The Peanut server is a reflector where you can meet people - check out CQ Ireland. The App can be downloaded free from the Google play store – it will be necessary to register with PA7LIM.

Southern Ireland Repeater Group Upgrade EI7WDR In Waterford City

Major upgrade work was carried out to the Southern Ireland Repeater Group's 70cm repeater EI7WDR on 433.275MHz at Carrickphierish in Waterford city on Saturday August 29th. All equipment including antennas and cables were replaced. The Motorola MC Compact repeater which had been in service on the site since 2004 was replaced with a Motorola MTR2000 which has a higher power output than the previous unit. The antennas were replaced with two Diamond SE-50s and the feeder cable upgraded to Andrews Helix LDF4-50. A Sinclair Q3220E duplexer replaced the old one which allowed the repeater use one antenna for TX and RX freeing up the second antenna for use with the EI7WCD digital repeater which was also installed on the site as part of the upgrade work. On site were Francis EI9KT, Gareth EI7FZB, Nicky EI3JB, Neil EI3JE and John EI8JA. The work carried out should greatly improve the repeater's coverage and users should note that the EI7WDR repeater on 433.275MHz now requires a CTCSS tone of 103.5 to access it. Signal reports would be appreciated and can be emailed to: [sirrepeaters /at/ gmail.com](mailto:sirnrepeaters/at/gmail.com).

On the Air next week

9M63MJ is a special event callsign for Malaysia Independence Day 2020. The station will be on the air until September 16th and will operate all bands 10 to 80 metres on CW, SSB and Digital. The first of the ARRL Moon bounce contests will be held over 48 hours next weekend the 12th and 13th on 2.3GHz and up. This is an all mode contest. The big international event next weekend is the European SSB DX Contest where European stations can only work stations outside of Europe. It runs for 48 hours from midnight Friday to midnight Sunday. It's a great chance to work some DX. If

you are trying to work US states or counties, the North American CW Sprint is on for 4 hours starting at midnight Saturday night on 80, 40 and 20 metres only.

Items for inclusion in next weeks radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Thursday Urgent items for the radio news may be telephoned to 087-6290574.

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